

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

NOVEMBER 29, 2005

PRESENT: Shawn Costello, James Gage, David Hurley, Jesse Amsel, Glenn Eberly and Walter Moody

ABSENT: None

STAFF

PRESENT: Robert Phillips, Town Planner and Reanna Goodreau, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Costello called the Ellington Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

III. NEW BUSINESS:

THE COMMISSION WENT OUT OF AGENDA ORDER.

2. Review of Open Space for the Hall Subdivision (3-lots) at 110 Pinnacle Road, APN 075-018-0000

Janet Hall came forward to review the plan. She stated that there is an existing house on the property and she is creating two new lots. Ms. Hall explained that there is a large conservation easement on the property.

Chairman Costello explained the commission's role in the review of subdivisions. Ms. Hall explained that she is not proposing giving any open space because there is an extensive conservation easement on the property.

Commissioner Gage stated that this property is abutted by the Kimball Forest and suggested that Ms. Hall propose a linear strip of land along the forest equal to 10% of the total land. After an extensive discussion, the commission requested that Ms. Hall attend next month's meeting with plans showing 10% open space to the Town.

CONTINUED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

THE COMMISSION RETURNED TO ORIGINAL AGENDA ORDER.

1. Review of Open Space for the Cicciarella Subdivision (4-lots) on Webster Road, APN 126-002-0000

Rachael Dearborn, Landmark Surveys, came forward to explain the plan. She stated that the proposal is for a 4 lot subdivision. Ms. Dearborn explained that there is unclaimed land above the subject property, which abuts the state forest. She explained that they are planning on surveying the land and giving the land to the state. This would be done to satisfy the open space requirement.

The commission discussed this extensively and stated that they do not feel comfortable with this proposal. The commission also explained that they would like open space deeded to the Town, not the State. Further, it was discussed how the applicant could legally “take” unclaimed land and the commission agreed that this open space proposal is unacceptable since the land is not currently owned by the applicant. Commissioner Gage stated that a portion of Charter’s Brook is situated on this parcel and that it may be of value to have open space over this section of the brook. There was an extensive discussion about taking open space lands over the brook. The commission requested that they attend next month’s meeting with a plan showing the disposition of the open space proposal.

CONTINUED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

3. Hunting on Town-Owned Properties

Chairman Costello stated that he missed the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting at which this subject was discussed, but explained that he spoke with the First Selectman regarding the commission’s stance on the subject prior to the meeting. Peter Charter stated that the BOS wanted to look into this further before making a decision. Chairman Costello said that he would attend the next BOS meeting in order to disseminate the information he obtained. The commission requested that the Town Attorney be further involved in these discussions.

CONTINUED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

4. Discussion of the Purchase of Development Rights for the Schneider Property off Porter Road, APN 123-007-0000

Commissioner Gage stated that this parcel would connect town-owned open space parcels. He explained that Mr. Schneider is willing to sell the development rights and noted that the cost of this is substantially less than purchasing the land outright. He also noted that this property provides protection of a ridgeline. Commissioner Gage asked for the commission’s support to move forward with obtaining the development rights of this parcel.

MOVED (HURLEY), SECONDED (MOODY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE COMMISSIONER GAGE TO DISCUSS WITH THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN THE NEED FOR AN APPRAISAL FOR THE PURPOSES OF BEGINNING NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS ON THE SCHNEIDER PROPERTY OFF OF PORTER ROAD, APN 123-007-0000.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Open Space Plan—Status

Chairman Costello noted that all members have had a chance to review the plan and prepare comments.

Commissioner Hurley explained that he had revised certain sections to clarify strategies from objectives. He also suggested that the open space inventory map be revised to clarify developed municipal properties. Commissioner Gage noted that the maps need clarifying and updating. He also stated that the plan should target certain parcels for conservation purposes, similar to the Town of Bolton's Open Space Plan. The Bolton plan uses a weighted ranking system based on several criteria to identify parcels of priority.

The commission agreed to review the changes in the strategies and objectives, look into changing the maps, and look into changing land categories in respect to municipal lands on the inventory map. The commission also agreed to further discuss labeling certain properties or regions in the plan.

CONTINUED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

2. Evaluation of Town-Owned Properties

Reanna Goodreau explained that she organized the list of town-owned properties by segregating them into similar uses. Chairman Costello requested that staff color code the table, so that the members could review it against the open space inventory map.

CONTINUED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

3. Development of Parcel Selection for Upcoming DEP Grant

TABLED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

4. Disposition of Funds when the Town Sells Land

TABLED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

5. Development of Deed Restrictions and Policies for Town-Owned Open Space and Properties

TABLED TO THE DECEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING.

6. Status of Route 30 and Route 140

Chairman Costello explained that it will take time to have discussions with the State regarding this item. He requested it be removed from the agenda until he has information to share with the commission.

CHAIRMAN COSTELLO REQUESTED THAT THIS ITEM BE TAKEN OFF THE AGENDA UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA: EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCUSSING PROPERTY ACQUISITION.

7. Executive Session—Discussion of Property Acquisition

MOVED (GAGE), SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:12 PM FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCUSSING PROPERTY ACQUISITION.

MOVED (COSTELLO), SECONDED (MOODY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:27 PM.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Set 2006 Meeting Schedule

The commission reviewed the proposed schedule and requested that the meetings in October and December be moved to the Tuesday before the meeting date proposed.

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (EBERLY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE 2006 MEETING SCHEDULE WITH MODIFICATIONS.

MODIFICATIONS: THE OCTOBER MEETING BE HELD ON THE 24TH & THE DECEMBER MEETING BE HELD ON THE 19TH.

2. Approval of the October 25, 2005 Meeting Minutes

MOVED (EBERLY), SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 25, 2005 MEETING MINUTES.

3. Correspondence:

- a. Memo to the Charter Revision Committee from Robert Phillips, dated 11/18/05
- b. Connecticut Wildlife, September/October 2005

SO NOTED.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

**MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (MOODY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN
THE MEETING AT 9:42 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Reanna Goodreau
Recording Secretary